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The KT

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Committee approves commercial markets in Laghman, Islam Qala port

KABUL: The regular meeting of the Inter-Ministerial Investment Committee has been held at the Marmarin Palace, approving proposals for the construction of commercial markets in Laghman and Islam Qala port, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs said in a statement Wednesday.

According to the statement, the proposals for the construction of a commercial market on the land of the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock in Laghman province, and the establishment of a commercial complex at the Islam Qala port in Herat province have been presented.

After a comprehensive assessment, the mentioned proposals have been approved by the Inter-Ministerial Investment Committee.

Additionally, proposals for the construction of a commercial and residential market in Kabul city and the development of a strategic framework for national economic growth were presented for discussion.

Committees were assigned to evaluate the proposals and submit their reports to the Inter-Ministerial Investment Committee within the designated timeframe, the statement added.

The Kabul Times

Returning migrants' expertise key to country's development, Kabir

KABUL: Mawlavi Abdul Kabir, the acting Minister of Refugees and Repatriations, said Wednesday that the returnees' expertise is key to the country's development and prosperity.

Speaking at a meeting of the Employment Committee for Returnees, Mawlavi Kabir emphasized the importance of utilizing the technical and professional skills of returnees, stating that these individuals possess valuable capabilities across various sectors that should be harnessed for the country's reconstruction and development, according to a statement from the ministry.

He urged the Ministries of Economy and Industry and Commerce to prioritize returnees in their economic and development contracts, with special attention to strengthening the rural economy. The participants stated that comprehensive plans are underway to create employment opportunities for newly arrived returnees and assured that no effort will be spared in facilitating job placement for them.

It is pertinent to mention that following the large-scale deportation of Afghan migrants from Iran and Pakistan, the Islamic Emirate has been working not only to provide land and shelter but also to create sustainable employment opportunities for them in the country. **The Kabul Times**

SCO members seeking closer ties with Kabul, Lavrov

KABUL: Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, speaking at a press conference following the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit, stated that nearly all SCO members are keen on enhancing bilateral ties with Afghanistan, according to a statement from the Russian Foreign Ministry the other day.

Lavrov highlighted that SCO member states share a collective vision for Afghanistan's reconstruction, backing its sustainable development as an independent, neutral, and peaceful nation.

"We also discussed ways to strengthen regional security, with particular focus on Afghanistan. Nearly all SCO member states are actively deepening their bilateral relations with Kabul. We share a common understanding of the importance of supporting Afghanistan's reconstruction and ensuring its sustainable development as an independent, neutral, and peaceful state, free from terrorism and drug trafficking," the statement quoted him as saying.

The assembly served as groundwork for the upcoming summit of the organization's leaders, slated to take place in China towards the end of August. **The Kabul Times**

Enhanced organizational reforms implemented in government institutions, official

Addressing a press conference at the Government Media Center to initiate the IEA's institutions' annual achievements, Mullah Wasi underscored the restructuring of institutions based on distinct missions, with redundant and overlapping structures being eliminated.

KABUL: Mullah Abdul Wasi, the head of the Prime Minister's Office, highlighted significant organizational reforms that have been implemented within the Emirati institutions, according to a statement from Zabihullah Mujahid, the IEA spokesman, on Wednesday.

Addressing a press conference at the Government Media Center to initiate the IEA's institutions' annual achievements, Mullah Wasi underscored the restructuring of institutions based on distinct missions, with redundant and overlapping structures being eliminated.

He viewed these alterations as outcomes of improved organizational management, asserting that services are now being delivered to those in need transparently and that coordination between local and central institutions is progressively being reinforced. **The Kabul Times**

MoPH destroys 65 tons of expired beverages in Kabul

KABUL: The Ministry of Public Health said in a statement the other day that 65 tons of expired and substandard non-alcoholic beverages have been destroyed in Kabul.

The statement added that the beverages, produced by a private company, were identified, collected, and quarantined by inspection teams from various food outlets across Kabul, as well as from the company's central warehouse.

The total volume of these substandard beverages reached 65 tons, equivalent to 11,000 cartons, which were destroyed in the Gazak area in the presence of representatives from relevant institutions and oversight bodies, the statement added.

To safeguard public health and ensure food safety, the Ministry of Public Health has been actively identifying and removing substandard and expired products from markets, warehouses, and distribution centers.

The Kabul Times

Delawar, IFRC Deputy discuss cooperation on humanitarian aids

Meanwhile, the IFRC deputy expressed appreciation for ARCS efforts and reaffirmed the Federation's continued commitment to assisting Afghanistan through strengthened cooperation and targeted humanitarian interventions.

KABUL: Shaikh Shahabuddin Delawar, President of the Afghan Red Crescent Society (ARCS), met with Ahmad Suleiman, Deputy of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), to explore ways of enhancing humanitarian support and deepening bilateral cooperation, the ARCS said in a statement Wednesday.

Speaking at the meeting, Delawar emphasized the urgent need for expanded collaboration to provide timely assistance to returning migrants and vulnerable families.

Meanwhile, the IFRC deputy expressed appreciation for ARCS efforts and reaffirmed the Federation's continued commitment to assisting Afghanistan through strengthened cooperation and targeted humanitarian interventions.

The Kabul Times

Road crash claims 11 lives, injures 5 on Kabul-Herat highway

LASHKARGAH: At least 11 people have been killed and five others injured in a traffic accident on the Kabul-Herat Highway, the Helmand Police Command said in a statement on Wednesday.

The statement said the crash occurred when a 580 model vehicle collided with a Mercedes in the Kariz area of Washer district, along the Kabul–Herat Highway.

The injured have been quickly transported by security personnel to medical centers of the 215th-Azm Army Corps in Gereshk district of Helmand, and four of the injured are reported to be in critical condition, the statement added.

Preliminary investigations suggest that the accident was primarily caused by driver negligence, including excessive speed and a failure to adhere to basic traffic rules and safety precautions, the statement said.

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WWW.TheKabulTimes.com

Uzair Baryalay, Director of Govt. Dailies

Email: Atvaishan@gmail.com

Editor-in-Chief, Nik Mohammad Nikmal

Email: Nikmal@TheKabulTimes.com

Mob: (+93)700 208 103

Deputy Editor-in-Chief, Fathulbari Akhgar

Mob: (+93)748 076 223

Distribution: 0202312509-(+93)766044966)

Graphic designers: Baktash, Habibullah Aiman

Translators: Abdul Baqi Haqyar, Noor Ahmad and Hamid Jhwok

Cartoonist: Sayed Hassan Samedi

Address: 8th PD, Olympic Square, East of Chaman-e-Huzori, Kabul, Afghanistan

Food for thought

Today's generation guarantees our bright future

Islamic Emirate fully supports returning Afghan students

When an Afghan returns to his country after decades of migration, this return is not only a physical journey; it is also a journey of dreams, hopes, and the beginning of a new life. Our migrant children and youth who return to their homeland from foreign lands bring with them not only bitter memories of migration but also a thirst for education. This moment is a great test for a committed system, whether this system will be able to provide an educational environment for these children, or will this generation once again fall prey to a hopeless fate? The Ministry of Education of the Islamic Emirate, in the face of this heavy responsibility, not only stood up honestly; but also made a heartfelt promise to bring comfort and hope to the heart of every Afghan. The ministry has promised that the children of Afghans returning from Iran, Pakistan, and other neighboring countries will be absorbed into the country's educational institutions to join the caravan of knowledge and continue their educational journey.

This move of the Islamic Emirate is not just an administrative decision; it also considers it a religious, national, and conscientious mission, which it is now implementing with true feeling and sincerity. This promise is a clear voice of the nation's spirit, honor, and religious responsibilities.

Children who have struggled with poverty, migration, and helplessness for years have now been assured that they will study in a dignified and Islamic environment that will not only contain books and lessons; but will also contain dignity, faith and self-reliance.

The Islamic Emirate calls on all respected parents, religious scholars, local leaders, and charitable institutions to stand shoulder to shoulder with the Islamic system for the success of this great humanitarian, Islamic, and national mission. This cooperation is not only a help to the education system; it is also a way to shape the fate of a generation.

The measure should become a practical example for future generations. If a system feels the pain of its people, then the people also support it sincerely.

Afghanistan and the people are proud of their committed, responsible, and sensitive Islamic system that stands firmly with the nation under any circumstances.

Good governance: Annual reporting practices in the Islamic Emirate

By: Hashmat.Naseri

In every political system, the establishment of regular, transparent, and reciprocal communication between government and citizens is essential for consolidating legitimacy, strengthening public trust, and ensuring sustainable stability. In this context, the "Annual Performance Review Initiative of the Government Institutions" represents a pioneering and structural government measure that underscores the Islamic Emirate's firm commitment to the principles of transparency and accountability. This initiative not only institutionalizes a culture of governmental responsiveness but also reflects a broader strategic effort to promote truth-based public discourse and foster informed citizen participation in governance processes. By facilitating direct engagement between government entities and the media, the program marks a significant transformation in the state's communication paradigm. It has emerged as a strategic mechanism for advancing the principles of inclusive, citizen-oriented, and outcome-based governance. Fundamentally, this initiative serves as a deliberate and structured approach to enhance public communication, institutionalize transparency and accountability, and build public confidence in state institutions. Organized annually by the Government Media and Information Center (GMIC), the program involves the active participation of senior government officials, national and international media, and independent journalists. Throughout the course of approximately one month, ministries and government bodies convene press briefings to present detailed annual reports outlining achievements, implemented reforms, and future strategic plans. The primary objective of the initiative is to institutionalize transparency across the public sector. This includes:

·Providing accurate and evidence-based statistics on government programs and development projects;

·Dispelling misconceptions and countering speculation regarding government performance; .

Strengthening a culture of accountability—recognized globally as a pillar of good governance;

·Enhancing public engagement in the development and reform agenda through participatory dialogue.

Moreover, the initiative offers a platform for fostering national cohesion, promoting social solidarity, and reinforcing a shared sense of purpose among government and citizens. Far beyond a ceremonial exercise, the Annual Performance Review Initiative encompasses a range of strategic dimensions that are critical to the institutionalization of sound governance. These dimensions can be categorized and analyzed as follows:

1.Transparency as the foundation of good governance: Transparency is the bedrock of public trust and a prerequisite for effective, accountable institutions. This program mandates that government entities submit detailed and evidence-based reports, thereby reinforcing transparency and enhancing institutional credibility.

2.Institutionalizing accountability among officials: Requiring officials to publicly present their annual performance before the media and public not only heightens awareness of their duties but also boosts their sense of responsibility and performance quality. This accountability mechanism helps minimize administrative negligence, reduce opportunities for corruption, and elevate professional standards across the civil service.

3.Reframing public perceptions of government: In an environment where certain media outlets and international actors seek to distort the image of the government, the systematic and transparent presentation of achievements helps to reshape public perception. It provides an accurate narrative centered on reform, service delivery, and balanced development, reinforcing the government's legitimacy both domestically and internationally.

4.Fostering healthy institutional competition: By requiring all ministries and entities to report publicly, the initiative fosters a constructive form of competition among institutions. Each seeks to outperform others through innovative initiatives and measurable results—thereby raising the overall standard of public sector performance and encouraging innovation in administrative leadership.

5.Providing reliable information to media and society: Accurate, timely, and documented information is a vital public good. Many rumors and misconceptions stem from a lack of access to credible data. This initiative offers the media and the public a reliable and official source of government performance data, enabling journalists and analysts to deliver more balanced and evidence-based reporting.

6.Promoting a performance-based governance model: Institutionalizing a culture of regular and formal performance reporting sets the foundation for a performance-oriented administrative system. Over time, this culture shift can evolve into a long-term governance model grounded in efficiency, meritocracy, and strategic planning. The Annual Performance Review Initiative of the Government Institutions is thus a strategic and institutional innovation that transcends temporary or ceremonial functions. It embodies the core principles of transparency, institutional accountability, and performance-based management—key attributes of modern, responsible governance. Given the relatively recent establishment of the current political system, there is an urgent need to employ mechanisms that not only showcase the government's authentic and measurable performance but also enhance public engagement and trust.

Ultimately, this process contributes to the improvement of service quality, strengthens administrative discipline, and reinforces public confidence in state institutions. From a structural perspective, this program also initiates a new administrative culture—one that demands each government body to consider itself answerable to the public and to commit to transparency through factual reporting. Its continuity is expected to promote inter-institutional competitiveness, improve the quality of reporting practices, and build a comprehensive data bank of government performance metrics. In conclusion, if complemented with further reforms—such as independent performance evaluation, professional capacity building in reporting, and the safeguarding of media freedom—the Annual Performance Review Initiative could evolve into a sustainable and exemplary model of responsible governance in Afghanistan. It would signify a practical realization of the principle that "government accountability to the people" is not merely a slogan, but a foundational and actionable tenet of the state.

Mass deportation of Afghans: Children facing serious health risks at border areas

The recent increased, sudden and forced deportation of Afghans from neighboring countries has put returnees, particularly the children, in serious health risks at the border areas, amid searing heat, poor sanitary conditions and lack of basic medical services.

Officials for the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies have warned that Afghan children returning from Iran are facing serious health risks at the border.

According to Nicole van Batenburg, a representative of the federation, Red Cross workers are reuniting hundreds of children with their families each day after many are separated during the chaotic crossings into western Afghanistan.

"Afghanistan is a forgotten crisis," van Batenburg said.

"There are so many emergencies around the world that global attention has shifted elsewhere, but the people here have been pushed to the margins." She stressed that many children are suffering from fevers, skin infections and other communicable illnesses brought on by the harsh conditions at the border crossings.

On the other hand, Doctors Without Borders/Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) has said that Afghan refugees fear seeking care amid Pakistan deportation campaign has forced more than 1 million Afghan refugees out of the country and has created a climate of fear preventing those who remain from accessing health care when they need it.

Since November 2023, the government of Pakistan has been implementing a campaign of deportation of Afghan refugees.

While at first it began with deporting unregistered Afghan refugees, all Afghan refugees are now being targeted, no matter their status.

The government has now announced a halt to deportations of Afghan refugees who have "proof of registration" cards, which was to begin on July 1, but this will not ease the fears of Afghans, especially for those without this documentation.

MSF teams are witnessing how the harsh reality of deportation is causing a climate of fear among Afghans in Pakistan.

For many, the threat of deportation has turned accessing essential medical care into a perilous choice.

The direct impact on people's health is stark.

Afghan refugees told MSF that they could not come their clinic for treatment because they would be arrested and deported.

"We are profoundly concerned about the welfare of people impacted by these deportation policies," said Xu Weibing, MSF's head of mission in Pakistan.

"For decades, many of these families have known no other home but Pakistan. Now, they live in constant fear."

The stories MSF teams have heard from Afghan refugees in Pakistan illustrate the trauma and hardship caused by forced returns. When people are deported, they are effectively being shuttled from one dire situation to another, while also being separated from their family.

"Many people who are forced to return to Afghanistan lose their livelihood and home, and have unmet health care needs, including those with non-communicable diseases that require ongoing treatment," said Stephen MacKay, MSF operations manager in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

"The Afghan health care system is chronically underfunded, under-resourced, and already struggling due to dwindling international aid.

It is under increasing stress, and the potential influx of hundreds of thousands more people will only exacerbate the pressure on the health system."

The pervasive anxiety of deportation is causing immense psychological distress among communities.

The deportation campaign has forced more than 1 million people to return to Afghanistan since November 2023, including more than 274,000 who were returned the first half of this year alone.

The recent increased, sudden and forced deportation of Afghans from Iran and Pakistan has put the returnees into serious health risks at border areas. According to the United Nations, more than 1.4 million people have returned to Afghanistan so far this year — the vast majority from Iran.

Over a million Afghans have either been expelled or compelled to return, with deportation campaigns ramping up since 2023. **Romal Sayedi**

Afghanistan, Pakistan should not miss trade opportunities

Reports suggest that in the first six months of 2025, trade volume between Afghanistan and Pakistan reached $1 billion.

According to the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, $277 million of this amount consisted of Afghan exports to Pakistan.

Major Afghan exports included cotton, coal, onions, tomatoes, raisins, mung beans, and talc stone.

Akhundzada Abdul Salam Jawad, spokesperson for the Ministry, stated: "Afghanistan's trade with Pakistan in the first half of 2025 amounted to $989 million, of which $277 million were exports and $712 million were imports. Key exports included cotton, coal, onions, tomatoes, raisins, mung beans, and talc, while imports consisted of Sella rice, medical drugs, sugar, cotton textiles, and raw materials for factories."

Meanwhile, the Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and Investment emphasized that despite the closure of the Ghulam Khan crossing, Afghanistan's export trend has improved compared to the same period last year.

Chamber officials said that currently, Afghan goods are exported through the Chaman, Spin Boldak, Torkham, and Dand Patan crossings, some of which were closed last year.

Khan Jan Alokozai, a board member of the Chamber, said: "Compared to last year, trade with Pakistan is normal.

Exports are flowing through Chaman, Torkham, and Dand Patan, particularly fresh fruits and vegetables. Although the Ghulam Khan route remains closed, a serious issue, the situation is better than last year, when many crossings were shut during the fruit season."

Mirwais Haji Zada, First Deputy of the Agriculture and Livestock Chamber, said: "My recommendation to the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan is to maintain constructive engagement with our friendly and neighboring country, Pakistan, to strengthen economic and trade relations. Pakistan is a good market for Afghanistan, and we don't have many of Pakistan's agricultural products available locally."

According to Chamber officials, Pakistan's repeated obstructions against Afghan export goods have significantly reduced trade volume and discouraged Afghan traders from engaging with the Pakistani market.

In the very past, Pakistan imposed 10% fee on Afghan transit goods that triggered criticism among the country's national traders.

Pakistan's Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) has imposed a 10% processing fee on dozens of categories of Afghan transit goods entering the country.

Pakistani media reported that this electronic fee will apply to five new categories of goods, including agricultural tools, cranes, electronic waste, and data-processing machines.

However, the Afghanistan–Pakistan Joint Chamber of Commerce has described the imposition of this 10% fee by the FBR as harmful.

Naqibullah Safi, Executive Director of the Afghanistan–Pakistan Joint Chamber of Commerce, stated: "According to a letter from Pakistan's Directorate General of Customs, some Afghan transit goods have been exempted from the 10% processing fee; however, a significant number of items—mainly machinery—have been included."

Meanwhile, some traders and economic experts have criticized Pakistan's conduct in trade and transit relations with Kabul, stressing the need to develop alternative trade routes to expand Afghanistan's commercial and transit options.

Abdul Jabbar Safi, head of the Kabul Industrialists Association, said: "Pakistan, in violation of international norms, imposes such tariffs under the pretext of economic strengthening or other reasons.

This damages Afghanistan's trade and causes us serious challenges."

Abdul Zahoor Mudaber, an economic analyst, noted: "Given the political tensions we are experiencing with Pakistan, a viable alternative could be Iran via Chabahar."

See P4

Why Islamic economics trumps capitalist models

The question of whether capitalism is compatible with an Islamic society, particularly under the governance of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (IEA), is complex and multifaceted.

This piece of writing examines the fundamental differences between capitalist and Islamic economic systems, explores their applicability in an Islamic society, and evaluates how these economic principles relate to Afghanistan's unique challenges and the IEA's governance model.

Capitalism, as famously articulated by Adam Smith in The Wealth of Nations, is based on individual profit maximization through a market mechanism often described as the "invisible hand." It emphasizes production and economic growth, driven largely by supply and demand, often with little regard for moral or social consequences.

The primary objective is maximizing profit, and wealth accumulation is celebrated as a sign of success.

However, this model tends to produce class divisions, wealth concentration, and sometimes social inequalities.

In stark contrast, Islamic economics is founded on principles of justice, equity, and stewardship under divine guidance. Wealth is considered a trust (amanah) from Allah, and humans are temporary custodians responsible for using it ethically and for the welfare of society. Production is oriented toward fulfilling genuine societal needs, and economic activities that harm individuals or the community are prohibited, regardless of potential profits.

Islamic economics emphasizes equitable wealth distribution, elimination of systemic barriers to fairness, and provision of basic human necessities like food, shelter, education, healthcare, and security.

Historically, Islamic economies have demonstrated remarkable success in creating prosperity and social cohesion.

The Indian subcontinent under Muslim rule became one of the wealthiest and most stable regions globally, thanks to policies rooted in Islamic economic principles.

These policies promoted wealth redistribution (through mechanisms like zakat), social welfare, and economic justice, which contrasted sharply with many capitalist systems that tend to exacerbate inequality. For example, Pakistan's current economic challenges highlight some of capitalism's pitfalls, such as wealth disparity and inefficient resource allocation.

Afghanistan's socio-economic context makes the question of capitalism's compatibility even more urgent.

Decades of conflict, poverty, and underdevelopment have left the country fragile, with destroyed infrastructure and millions displaced.

See P4

The vital role of incentive programs in promoting culture of reading

In an era marked by rapid technological advancements and constant digital engagement, the timeless value of reading remains a pillar of intellectual and cultural development.

Across the world, reading remains a key driver of personal growth, critical thinking, creativity, and informed citizenship.

However, in many societies, particularly those facing economic hardship, conflict, or limited access to quality education, reading habits have declined or failed to take root altogether.

In this context, launching incentive-based programs that encourage reading, especially among young people, is not just beneficial; it is essential.

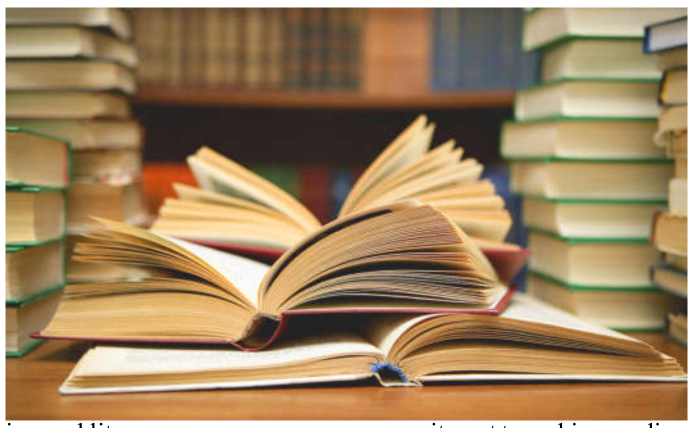
Incentive programs, when designed and implemented thoughtfully, play a vital role in fostering a vibrant reading culture.

These initiatives can range from book festivals and reading competitions to mobile libraries, free book distribution, and public recognition of readers and writers.

When integrated with school curricula or community-based efforts, such programs not only increase access to books but also build excitement and motivation around the act of reading itself.

Therefore, the Ministry of Information and Culture, through its Directorate of Public Libraries, has taken a meaningful step toward revitalizing the nation's intellectual landscape by launching a festival titled "Kitab-e-Kabul."

This initiative is not simply a celebration of books but a deliberate national campaign to reignite public interest in reading and literacy.



The festival features a variety of engaging programs, including cultural gatherings, interactive book exhibitions, public lectures, and reading-focused activities, many of which are being extended beyond Kabul to reach audiences across the provinces.

The festival also serves as a platform for authors, publishers, students, and literary enthusiasts to connect, share ideas, and foster a deeper appreciation for written knowledge.

Through this inclusive and interactive approach, the Ministry seeks to build bridges between generations and communities, using books as a unifying force.

Senior officials, including the Minister of Information and Culture and Deputy Ministers for Youth and Culture, and Publications Affairs, have consistently emphasized the pivotal role that reading plays in mental development, the preservation of national identity, and the cultivation of intellectual independence.

They have reiterated their commitment to making reading not just an occasional activity but a daily habit among the youth and wider public.

The festival is part of a broader vision to create an informed, thoughtful society equipped to engage with modern challenges and lead with knowledge and creativity.

This long-term commitment includes efforts to improve public library access, encourage local authorship, support publishers, and foster a culture in which the written word holds real value.

Through initiatives like Kitab-e-Kabul, the Ministry aims to plant the seeds of curiosity and lifelong learning across the country, laying the groundwork for a culturally rich and intellectually resilient Afghanistan.The benefits of these programs are multifaceted. First, they help normalize reading as a daily activity and a source of enjoyment, not just a school requirement.

See P4

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SPORTS

AFC 'B' coaching license course kicks off in Kabul

The Afghanistan Football Federation (AFF) has officially launched the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) 'B' License Coaching Course in Kabul.

This important educational program aims to enhance the professional capacity of local football coaches and elevate the overall standard of the sport in the country.

A total of 26 aspiring coaches are participating in the course, which is scheduled to run for ten days.

The training program features a combination of theoretical and practical sessions, covering essential aspects of modern football coaching.

Topics include tactical planning, match analysis, player development, fitness training, and coaching ethics.

The instructors will also focus on preparing the participants to take on more advanced roles within their clubs or regional teams.

The AFF believes that empowering local coaches with international-standard training is key to long-term football development in Afghanistan.

By equipping coaches with updated methodologies and knowledge aligned with AFC regulations, the federation hopes to create a stronger grassroots and professional football structure.

The course is being conducted under the supervision of certified AFC instructors, who bring years of experience in coaching and coach education.

Their guidance is expected to play a crucial role in shaping the participants into qualified, licensed coaches ready to contribute to the growth of Afghan football.

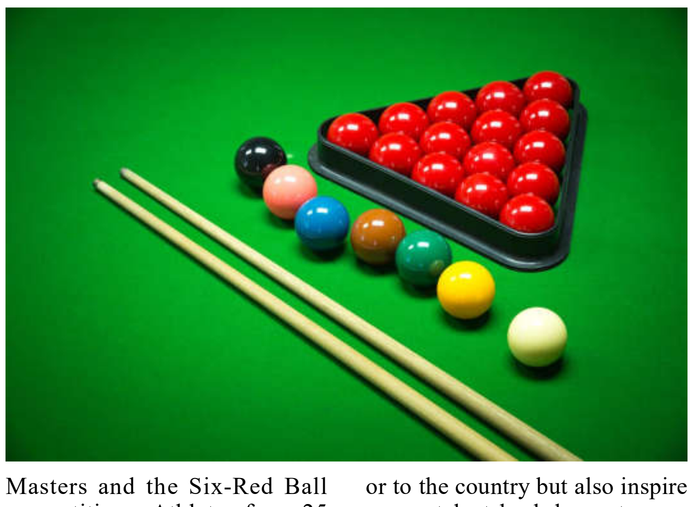
This initiative reflects the AFF's ongoing commitment to technical development, talent nurturing, and alignment with broader AFC and FIFA goals. It also serves as an important step in building a sustainable football future for Afghanistan.

The Kabul Times

Afghan snooker player defeats Oman & Bahrain, makes top 16 cut

Afghanistan's national snooker player, Saleh Mohammad Mohammadi, delivered an impressive performance at the ongoing International Snooker Masters Championship by defeating his opponents from Oman and Bahrain. He won both matches with a dominant 3-0 score line, securing a place among the top 16 players of the tournament.

The prestigious event, hosted by the Kingdom of Bahrain in its capital city, Manama, began on July 13 and will continue until July 25. The tournament features two separate categories: The Masters and the Six-Red Ball competitions. Athletes from 25 countries are taking part, making it a highly competitive and internationally recognized event.



Saleh Mohammad is representing Afghanistan in the Masters category, while young snooker player Ahmad Nauman Nauman is competing in the Six-Red Ball category on behalf of the country's junior team. Their participation marks a significant step forward for Afghanistan's presence on the international snooker scene.

Saleh's next challenge will be against the seasoned player Mohammad Al Joker from the United Arab Emirates. This upcoming match is expected to be a critical test of his skills and determination as he aims to advance further in the competition.

The Afghanistan Billiards and Snooker Federation expressed pride in the performance of its athletes, highlighting that such achievements not only bring honor to the country but also inspire young talent back home to pursue excellence in the sport.

Saleh Mohammad's advancement to the top 16 underscores his experience, discipline, and technical abilities. His success is seen as a positive reflection of the progress being made in Afghan cue sports, despite limited resources and international exposure.

The Kabul Times

Volleyball tournament kicks off in Nangarhar

A regional volleyball tournament has officially begun in the Gandomak area of Sherzad district, Nangarhar province. The event is organized by the Nangarhar Volleyball Federation, which operates under the province's Directorate of Physical Education and Sports.

The main objective of the tournament is to foster unity and friendship among young athletes, as well as to promote physical activity and sportsmanship at the community level.

The organizers hope that such events will encourage youth participation in sports and help develop local talent in volleyball and other disciplines.

Officials from the Nangarhar Sports Directorate praised the enthusiasm of the players and the support of the local community. They emphasized that sports play a vital role in promoting peace, discipline, and healthy lifestyles, especially in rural areas like Sherzad.

The 15-day tournament is expected to draw significant attention from residents and volleyball fans in the region, providing an opportunity for emerging athletes to showcase their skills in a competitive environment. It also marks an important step in strengthening grassroots sports in eastern Afghanistan, despite challenges in infrastructure and resources.

The Kabul Times

The vital role of incentive programs...

From P3

Second, they build bridges between generations by preserving literary heritage and encouraging intergenerational dialogue through shared stories and traditional literature.

Third, they address disparities in education by providing free or low-cost access to books and learning resources, particularly for children and youth in rural areas.

Moreover, a strong culture of reading contributes to broader societal progress. Literate populations are more likely to engage in democratic processes, pursue higher education, and contribute to economic development. Communities that read are more resilient, more informed, and better equipped to address social challenges collectively.

To sustain this momentum, support from national institutions, international organizations, and civil society is vital. Partnerships with global publishing houses, educational foundations, and donor agencies can help expand the reach of incentive programs. Equally important is the role of local authors, librarians, teachers, and cultural leaders who inspire and guide readers at the grassroots level.

On one hand, promoting a culture of reading is not merely a cultural luxury; it is a strategic investment in the intellectual infrastructure of a nation.

A well-read society thinks critically, innovates effectively, and engages constructively in civic life. In this effort, incentive programs serve as powerful catalysts.

They help bridge socio-economic gaps in access to books and learning resources, especially in underserved or rural areas.

They spark curiosity and a lifelong love of learning among the youth, and they strengthen literacy, comprehension, and analytical thinking skills that are crucial in all walks of life.

By embedding reading into the public consciousness through initiatives such as book festivals, competitions, school reading clubs, and public library events, societies lay the foundation for sustainable intellectual and cultural growth.

On the other hand, cultivating a reading culture leads to the development of a more thoughtful, enlightened, and responsible citizenry.

It nurtures a sense of empathy, tolerance, and open-mindedness, values critical for social harmony in diverse communities. In turn, this thoughtful population becomes the driving force behind national progress.

Reading encourages innovation, feeds the creative industries, and contributes to an informed workforce capable of adapting to modern challenges.

Moreover, by producing a generation that values knowledge over ignorance, it contributes directly to long-term social cohesion and economic development.

Nations with high literacy rates and strong reading habits tend to show better outcomes in health, governance, entrepreneurship, and productivity.

In conclusion, the promotion of reading through strategic, incentive-based programs is far more than an educational or cultural exercise; it is a transformative national endeavor.

A nation that leads. Governments, educators, parents, and international partners must come together to nurture this culture, ensuring that books and reading become an inseparable part of the everyday life of every citizen.

Only then can societies fully unlock their intellectual and developmental potential, guided not by chance but by the knowledge contained in the written word.

Nesar Ahmad Tareq

Why Islamic economics trumps capitalist...

From P3

Since the IEA's return to power in 2021, international sanctions and frozen assets have further strained the economy.

The IEA prioritizes economic self-sufficiency and aligns its policies closely with Islamic principles, yet Afghanistan remains heavily reliant on foreign aid and imports.

This raises the question: can capitalism's market-driven production and private enterprise coexist with Islamic economic values under the IEA?

The IEA's economic framework is deeply rooted in justice and equity.

Unlike capitalism's emphasis on profit, the IEA's approach ensures wealth distribution serves collective welfare, meeting citizens' fundamental needs.

The state plays a critical role in regulating ownership and economic activity through sharia-compliant laws governing property, trade, and wealth redistribution.

Mechanisms like zakat and sadaqah serve not only as charity but as tools for social equity.

The IEA's policies actively seek to prevent wealth concentration and dismantle class disparities often inherent in capitalist systems.

One key example of the IEA's approach is its focus on agricultural development and local production. This aligns with the Islamic economic principle of producing based on necessity rather than profit. By promoting self-reliance, the IEA aims to reduce dependence on politically tied foreign aid and imports, diverging from capitalist models that prioritize global trade and profit maximization.

Though Islamic economics and capitalism differ at their core, certain capitalist elements—such as private enterprise and market competition—could be adapted within an Islamic framework, provided they comply with sharia principles. Private businesses in Afghanistan might operate successfully under the IEA if they avoid prohibited practices like usury (riba), ensure fair wages, and produce socially beneficial goods. Entrepreneurship and innovation could be encouraged, but regulated to prevent exploitation and harm.

Nonetheless, capitalism's fundamental focus on individual profit and self-interest conflicts with Islam's imperative for justice and equitable wealth distribution. The capitalist "invisible hand" often leads to social inequality and leaves vulnerable populations without access to basic necessities—an untenable outcome for a country like Afghanistan, where poverty is widespread. The IEA's insistence on social welfare and justice suggests that a hybrid economic model—incorporating regulated market mechanisms within a sharia-compliant framework—is a more practical solution than wholesale adoption of capitalism.

The IEA faces significant hurdles in implementing an Islamic economic system: international isolation, scarce resources, and institutional weaknesses challenge economic stability. Yet, the commitment to self-sufficiency and equitable distribution offers promise. Investments in agriculture, infrastructure, and education can create a sustainable economy centered on people's needs. Zakat collection and redistribution programs can alleviate poverty and foster social cohesion.

Moreover, by rejecting capitalist excesses such as speculative finance and exploitative labor practices, the IEA aligns closely with Islamic ethics. Encouraging local industries and regulating markets to prevent monopolies or harmful production can establish an economy that embodies Islamic values and addresses contemporary challenges.

While capitalism has driven growth worldwide, its core principles are largely incompatible with an Islamic society like Afghanistan under the IEA. Capitalism's emphasis on profit and individual gain conflicts with Islam's focus on justice, equity, and collective welfare. The IEA's economic vision, grounded in sharia, seeks to distribute wealth fairly and fulfill basic needs, offering a strong contrast to capitalist priorities.

However, integrating certain capitalist elements, like private enterprise, may be feasible if carefully regulated under Islamic law. Encouraging small businesses and local markets can stimulate economic activity without compromising ethical standards. Leveraging Afghanistan's natural resources and agricultural potential could foster a self-reliant economy that reduces dependence on politically conditioned foreign aid.

The historical success of Islamic economies proves that sharia-based systems can generate prosperity and equity. Afghanistan's unique context calls for a tailored approach balancing Islamic principles with practical strategies. The IEA's focus on meeting fundamental human needs through equitable wealth distribution provides a foundation for long-term stability, though it must overcome challenges like limited expertise and international isolation.

Adopting a purely capitalist system risks deepening inequalities and undermining Islamic governance. The failures observed in neighboring countries highlight capitalism's dangers when unregulated. A hybrid approach that blends market mechanisms with Islamic ethics offers a balanced path forward, enabling growth while safeguarding justice.

Ultimately, the IEA's success depends on translating Islamic economic principles into actionable policies that meet Afghanistan's immediate needs and foster sustainable development. By emphasizing self-sufficiency, equitable wealth sharing, and sharia-compliant governance, the IEA can build an economy aligned with Islamic values and capable of restoring Afghanistan's economic vitality—serving as a model for other Muslim nations seeking alternatives to capitalism.

Ghulam Reza Omidi

Afghanistan, Pakistan should not miss trade...

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Pakistani media stated that the purpose of the new fee on Afghanistan-bound transit goods is to prevent the misuse of Afghanistan's lower customs tariffs, boost tax revenue, and enhance transparency in Pakistan's trade processes. On the other hand, the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan has been seeking to resolve trade tensions with the neighboring Pakistan. The country's acting minister of industry and commerce, during his visit to Pakistan, held discussions with Pakistani officials on extending the APTTA agreement, improving transit facilities, and exporting Afghan coal to Pakistan. During the visit, the delegation of the Islamic Emirate also emphasized 24/7 operation of the Torkham crossing, expanding bilateral trade via the Ghulam Khan crossing, and forming a joint committee to strengthen trade relations between Kabul and Islamabad. Akhundzada Abdul Salam Jawad, spokesperson for the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, said: "In this meeting, constructive proposals were presented to strengthen trade relations between the two countries, particularly the proposal by Pakistan to establish a joint committee and hold regular meetings to review and resolve commercial issues between Afghanistan and Pakistan. The topic of Afghan migrants was also discussed."

The Afghanistan Chamber of Agriculture and Livestock considered this visit a positive step toward addressing commercial challenges between the two nations. Mirwais Hajizadah, deputy of the chamber, said: "I suggest that the Minister of Industry and Commerce sign a formal agreement or memorandum that would remain valid for two or three years upon return to Afghanistan. This would give traders the confidence they need to boost their exports." Trader Omid Haidari stated: "This move can significantly reduce our challenges. The exchange of trade delegations can help minimize issues we faced in the past year and act as a solid barrier against future challenges, allowing us to build closer trade relations." The Islamic Emirate delegation's trip to Pakistan comes amid a backdrop of multiple trade tensions in the past year — including a two-percent tariff imposed on Afghan transit goods and the closure of key crossings, which, according to business chambers, have had a significant negative impact on trade and transit between the two countries.

So, the two countries should avoid any political tension damaging trade relations between the two sides. No parties should politicalize trade and all tensions should be resolved peacefully.

Inam Hashemi